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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2005

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BRIEFING

General Buyukanit to Kick Off US Visit December 10: Turkish
Land Forces Commander General Yasar Buyukanit is to pay an
official visit to the US on December 10 at the invitation of
US Army Chief of Staff General Peter Schoomaker, "Cihan News
Agency" (CNA) reports on Thursday. Buyukanit will arrive in
New York on Saturday and will pay a visit to West Point
Military Academy. On Monday, Buyukanit will move on to
Washington to meet with US Defense Department Undersecretary
for Policy, Eric Edelman, former US Ambassador to Turkey.
General Buyukanit is expected to convey Turkey's
expectations from the US with regard to the PKK during his
four-day stay in the US. Land Forces Commander Buyukanit is
tipped to take over the Chief of Turkish General Staff (TGS)
post in August 2006.

FBI Director Mueller Due in Ankara: Federal Bureau of
Investigation (FBI) Director Robert Mueller is to visit
Ankara on late Thursday to meet Friday with high-level
officials of the Turkish intelligence service MIT, interior
ministry officials and police chiefs, papers report.
Mueller will discuss with Turks al-Qaida related terror
activities in Turkey, and the issues of human trafficking
and refugees. On Friday, Mueller will call on Turkish
Security Director-General Gokhan Aydinler, and will have
lunch with high-level police officials. Papers expect the
Turks to give Mueller a file on the activities of the
outlawed PKK. Mueller will hold a press briefing in Ankara
on Friday afternoon before he departs for the US.
Turkey a Transit Country in Smuggling Nuclear Parts into
Libya: The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) says
that thousands of key nuclear items were transferred to
Libya through companies in Turkey, "Cumhuriyet" reports.
The Turkish Customs Inspection Board has launched an
investigation into the role of Turkish companies in the
trafficking of nuclear parts, and released a report on
November 29. According to the report, Turkish companies
sent 'container supports, ring magnets, stators, and

frequency converters' to Libya. The "Tekno Elektrik," company owned by Gunes Cire, and the EKA company, owned by Selim Alguadis, have bought 40,084 ring magnets from Germany. 20,000 of the magnets have been sent to Dubai-based "Gulf Industries," and the rest to the "Abid Light" company in Pakistan. 40,034 'ring magnets' have been sent to Libya from various countries. The US seized only 19,477 magnets in Libya, and the remaining 20,557 are missing. Specialists say that the missing parts could be used to produce up to 20 nuclear weapons. Companies in Turkey have supplied Libya with nuclear parts worth USD 10 million. `A report by the US Energy Department said that, 6,992 centrifuge motors sent to Libya by Turkish companies had been seized under the framework of Libya's nuclear program, and that they can be used in manufacturing enough enriched uranium to make seven nuclear weapons every year,' said the Turks' report submitted to the Chief Prosecutor in Istanbul. The report asked the prosecutor to file a lawsuit against EKA company partners Zubeyr Baybars Cayci, Ertugrul Sozmen and Marco Walter Tinner for organized smuggling that endangers the political, financial and military security of Turkey. If a lawsuit is filed by the prosecutor, the suspects may face up to 32 years in prison, says "Cumhuriyet."

Israel Needs Turkey to Strike Iran: A report drafted by US Army War College for Pentagon military leaders said that Israel lacked the capacity to extensively bomb Iran's nuclear facilities on its own, "Hurriyet" reports from Washington. The report said that the distance of targets and refueling problems restricted the Israeli Air Forces' capacity for an effective strike. Iran's nuclear facilities are located at a distance of 1500-1700 km from Israel. The report expresses doubt that countries such as Turkey and India will allow Israeli planes to stop over during possible attack flights against Iran. The US report says that Israel needs logistical support from Turkey to launch a preemptive strike against Iran.

Barzani Rejects, Talabani Accepts Cooperation With Turkey against the PKK: "Cumhuriyet" cites the Greek daily "Elefterotipia" as claiming that the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) leader Massoud Barzani had refused to cooperate in possible Turkish military operations against the PKK camps in Kandil Mountains. "Elefterotipia" reported Kurdish sources as saying that Barzani's refusal had made officials from the Turkish intelligence service MIT contact President Talabani in an effort to seek support in the fight against the PKK. Talabani has accepted Turkish offers for financial aid, and agreed to back Turkish efforts to eliminate the PKK. In a recent meeting with the Iranian President Ahmadinejad, Talabani offered to allow military action against the PKK in exchange for guarantees that the borders between the two countries will not be changed.

Iraqi Kurdish Parties Disagree on Election Alliance: Turkish papers report that northern Iraqi parties, Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (KDP), have been fighting with the Iraqi Kurdistan Islam Union (IKIU) due to IKIU's reluctance to enter the December 15 legislative elections on a single list with the other two major Kurdish parties. On Tuesday, four Kurds were killed during attacks by KDP members on IKIU offices in several northern Iraqi towns such as Duhok, Zaho, Amedi, Saklava, Kadas, Serdaras and Akra. "Zaman" says that Ankara has recently begun to cooperate closely with IKIU leader Selahaddin Muhammad Bahaddin against Barzani and Talabani. Bahaddin met with Turkish MFA officials in Ankara three weeks ago, says "Zaman."

AKP MP Complains of Military Appearance of Ankara: Turkish papers cite the ruling AK Party lawmaker Resul Tosun as writing in the Islamist-oriented "Yeni Safak" yesterday that the war academy and the headquarters of the force commands should be moved outside Ankara, as they give the EU-aspirant Turkish capital the image of a military town. Tosun said that to transform Ankara into a civilian capital, the Turkish General Staff (TGS) needs to pull back the military guards deployed in parliament, to move the War Academy to another city or at least outside Ankara, and to move Land, Air and Navy Force Commands outside Ankara. Tosun complained that members of parliament were working in the shadow of military compounds, adding that the atmosphere of Ankara was very different from the atmosphere of European capitals.

AKP MPs Criticize Party Policies: AK Party lawmaker Mahmut Kocak joined his colleague Turhan Comez, criticizing the lack of democracy in the ruling party. Papers expect the AKP administration to take disciplinary action against Comez after PM Erdogan returns home from his state visits to New Zealand and Australia. Dailies report Kocak as saying that party policies had been shaped according to the preferences of the leader rather than the priorities enlisted in the party program. Kocak recently conducted an opinion survey which showed a decrease in popular support for AKP.

Nationalist lawmakers in AKP have been disturbed with the statements by PM Erdogan that being a citizen of the Republic of Turkey constituted an 'upper-identity' for all Turks, and with irregularities in privatization which involved Finance Minister Kemal Unakitan, papers speculate. "Cumhuriyet" recalls that 11 nationalist MPs in AKP had released a declaration to condemn FM Gul for meeting with former Kurdish lawmakers. The paper claims that AKP lawmakers opposing party policies had increased to 30 following recent developments.

Erdogan in Australia: Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan began a five-day visit to Australia Wednesday expected to focus on trade, security issues and preserving historic World War I battlefields in Gallipoli in Turkey, Turkish papers report. Erdogan, accompanied by four cabinet ministers and a large business delegation, met Victorian state Premier Steve Bracks and business leaders in Melbourne at the start of his trip, the first to Australia by a Turkish prime minister. Erdogan said during talks with Turkish community representatives in Melbourne that the state ban on women wearing headscarves in universities remains a problem in Turkey, stressing that the most important factor is to achieve agreement on the issue in parliament. Prime Minister John Howard said prior to his meeting with Erdogan in Canberra on Thursday that their talks will touch on the fight against terrorism as well as on the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan. Howard also said the two leaders would discuss the preservation of the Gallipoli battlefields, which sparked controversy earlier this year when the Australian press claimed they had been partially destroyed by construction work. "Agence France Press" (AFP) reported on Wednesday that Erdogan said the US-led invasion of Iraq had transformed the country into a training ground for extremists. He said global defense budgets totaled one trillion USD annually, with only a fraction of that amount spent trying to eradicate extremism's root causes such as poverty, ignorance and religious intolerance. Erdogan's remarks that militarism had failed in Iraq implicitly challenged Canberra's strong commitment to the US-led campaign in Iraq, AFP commented. "We must have a lot of intelligence sharing in order to dry up the swamp of terrorism," Erdogan said. Erdogan will return home on Sunday.

EU Warns Turkey on Torture: Dailies report EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn as stating to the BBC that torture was still seen in Turkey despite the fact that Ankara, in an effort to adjust to EU regulations, has pledged to maintain a policy of zero-tolerance against torture and mistreatment. Rehn had earlier warned that Turkey's EU accession process will not advance unless Ankara displays a stern attitude against torture. Rehn warned that Turkey's EU drive will be harmed if Orhan Pamuk, the renowned Turkish novelist due to appear before court on December 16 for statements on the mass-killings of Armenians by Ottomans, is found guilty. Rehn, however, also told the BBC that there had been remarkable improvements in Turkey, thanks to the EU reforms process.

Sensoy the New Turkish Ambassador to US: Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) Deputy Undersecretary Nabi Sensoy has been appointed Turkish Ambassador to Washington to replace Faruk Logoglu, Turkish papers report. Logoglu will return to the MFA in Ankara. MFA Deputy Undersecretary Volkan Bozkir is appointed as Turkey's permanent representative in the EU. Ambassadors Husnu Gurcan Turkoglu and Fuat Tanlay have been appointed to Tehran and Brussels respectively.

OIC Stands against Terrorism, Extremism in Islamic World: Turkey is being represented at the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) summit in Mecca by Parliamentary Speaker Bulent Arinc and Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul, papers report. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the OIC Secretary General, told the opening of the summit that one of the challenges Islamic nations face today is the distorted image of Islam around the world. This distortion was largely caused by the actions of some extremist Muslims, said Ihsanoglu, underlining that terrorism in the Islamic world was a result of social and economic problems. However, the ten-year program to be issued at the end of the summit can rescue Muslim nations from the existing situation, Ihsanoglu said. The final communiqu  will announce that Turkey, according to an earlier decision adopted by the OIC, will host an Islamic women's conference soon, say papers.

PKK-Linked Counterfeiters Arrested in Istanbul: "Yeni Safak" reports that Turkish police seized several bags full of forged US Dollar banknotes in simultaneous security operations held yesterday in Istanbul and Ankara. Acting on a tip-off by Ankara, police raided a printing house in Istanbul and seized counterfeit USD banknotes. A 23-member gang, suspected to be linked to the PKK, has been arrested.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq

"As Dialogue Channels Are Opening"

Soli Ozel opined in the mass appeal "Sabah (12/8): "Only a federal structure can save Iraqi territorial integrity so Turkey should revise its Iraq policy and accept the reality of a Kurdish federal state in northern Iraq. Currently Turkey has started to signal some change in its policy on the domestic Kurdish issue, which is leading to consequences for its northern Iraq policy. The Turkish Director of Intelligence recently met with Barzani. Regular flights from Istanbul to northern Iraq have started. Cooperation with Turkey will also serve the interests of Iraqi Kurds, regarding their political structure. In the days ahead, we might even see some developments concerning the settlement of the PKK issue through dialogue between Turkey, Iraqi Kurds and the US."

"New Politics"

Okay Gonensin observed in the mass appeal "Vatan" (12/8): "As Barzani emphasized, one of the main problems of an 'independent Kurdistan' is the fact that it has no sea coast. To ship its oil in a safe environment Kurdistan only has access to the open seas via Turkey. As Turkey enters into the EU process, a newly revised security procedure is needed. That means Turkey has to adapt a policy line based on the realities in the region by taking Kurds in Turkey as well as Kurds in northern Iraq into account. There are credible signals showing that Ankara has started working on this. The fact of the matter is that regardless of Kurdistan's status in northern Iraq, whether federal or independent, it still needs Turkey. And Turkey will benefit from a policy shaped by this reality."

"The Congress in Erbil"

Yilmaz Oztuna wrote in the conservative-nationalist "Turkiye" (12/8): "The Independent Kurdistan Conference convened in Erbil, the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan, on November 11, 2005. The American Kurdish Congress sponsored the conference, the topic of which was "Kurds in Turkey, Iran and Syria." The possibility of establishing autonomous Kurdish areas in the Kurdish populated provinces of countries other than Iraq was also debated at the conference. How Kurds living in Turkey, Iran and Syria, can fight against their states in order to achieve autonomy was also discussed. One of the discussions at the conference focused on the possibility of Kurdish regions in other countries uniting and establishing a 'Greater Kurdistan'. This conference showed that the organizer of the conference, the US, is preparing for some action. I have been warning for months that Washington is planning to establish a 'Greater Kurdistan' together with a 'Greater Armenia' if Turkey rejects coordinating with the US in restructuring the Middle East."

WILSON